

Derbyshire and Derby Dementia Together Co-Production Newsletter

Issue: Autumn 2026

'A group of people with lived experience working together to shape better dementia support in Derbyshire'

Join the Dementia Together Co-Production Group!

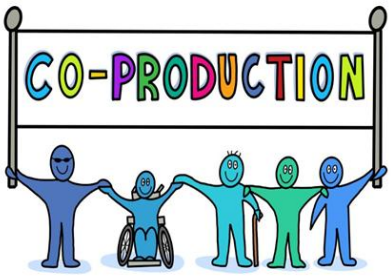
Co-chairs Wendy Burton (Expert by Experience) and Phil Wall (Adult Social Care and Health) warmly invite people with lived experience to join our Derbyshire-wide co-production group. Meetings are hybrid (online and in-person), and with support available for those needing transport.

We are looking for more people with lived experience of Dementia in Derbyshire and Derby to join this group. It provides a real opportunity to comment on and improve Derbyshire's Dementia Services. Engage as much or as little as you want!

Spread the word and contact derbyshire@alzheimers.org.uk to get involved!

Meetings held in 2025 / 26:

- February | End of Life Care and Dementia
- April | Review of Joint Dementia Strategy (1 year in)
- June | Care Homes & Respite
- August | Groups, Creative Activities & Community Support



Next Meeting & Topic:

- Oct | Training and Respite

Why Join us?

- Meet other carers and share experiences in a safe space
- Discuss how to remove barriers and challenges
- Have input on how Dementia services are provided

Achievements and work in progress:

🧠 Brain Health Toolkit Successfully Launched



The Derby and Derbyshire Brain Health Toolkit has now been formally launched and promoted across communities, partner organisations and health and care services.

Members of the Dementia Together Group helped shape and test the toolkit before launch. Early feedback has been very positive, with people praising its accessibility, practical advice and easy-to-use design.

Explore the toolkit: https://jsnaderbyshire.org.uk/bhtk/

🏡 Shaping Better Care Home and Respite Support



At our June meeting, members discussed care homes and respite care with providers, carers and Adult Social Care professionals.

Key messages emerging from the discussion included:

- The importance of seeing the person, not just the dementia diagnosis.
- Using life stories and personal interests to deliver meaningful care.
- Involving families as equal partners in planning and decision-making.
- Improving information for carers before they reach crisis point.
- Developing clearer guidance about respite options and funding arrangements.

The group is continuing to support work to improve information and guidance for carers considering respite care.

📖 New Respite Guide Being Developed



Group members have been reviewing a new guide for unpaid carers that aims to explain:

- Different types of respite support.
- Assessment processes.
- Funding arrangements.
- Sources of local advice and help.

The guide has been developed in response to feedback that information about respite can often feel difficult to find and understand.

Members continue to provide feedback to ensure the final resource reflects real experiences of carers and people living with dementia.

🧠 Carer's Story: Starting the Dementia Journey



Wendy Burton, Co-Chair of the Dementia Co-production Group, has shared her personal experience as a carer in a recent article for Naidex, offering practical advice to families in the early days following a dementia diagnosis. Drawing on her own journey supporting her husband Ian after his diagnosis of Frontotemporal Dementia, Wendy highlights the importance of accessing local support, planning legal and financial affairs early, understanding available benefits, and connecting with peer support networks. Through sharing her story, Wendy hopes to help other carers feel less overwhelmed, better informed, and more confident in navigating the dementia journey.

Read Wendy's full article, "Starting the dementia journey: A carer's guide to navigating the early days after a diagnosis", on the Naidex website.

Joined Up Care Derbyshire

🧩 Improving the Lived Experience of People with Rare and Young Onset Dementias



Through extensive co-production with people living with dementia, carers and partner organisations, a new improvement programme has been developed to strengthen the Rare and Young Onset Dementias Pathway. The work focuses on improving communication, coordination and professional knowledge, ensuring people receive the right information, support and guidance at the right time. Key priorities include developing better navigation and coordination support, improving awareness and understanding of rare and young onset dementias, strengthening professional practice, and making pathways more responsive to the needs of people and families throughout their dementia journey.

Led over the last 18 months by **Michael Rose (Derby City Council)** and **Wendy Burton**, the group has brought together lived experience, health, social care and voluntary sector partners to co-design practical improvements across the pathway. For more information or to get involved, please contact michael.rose@derby.gov.uk

🎵 Celebrating Community Groups and Creative Activities



Our August meeting explored the wide range of groups and activities supporting people living with dementia across Derbyshire and Derby.

We heard about:

🎤 Alzheimer's Society Groups

Local Memory Cafés, Singing for the Brain sessions and specialist community groups continue to provide opportunities for friendship, peer support and reducing social isolation.

Work is also underway to improve engagement with rural communities and people from under-represented backgrounds.

Our Groups – Dementia Derbyshire and Derby City

DERBYSHIRE County Council · Derby City Council · NHS · Alzheimer's Society

CONTROLLED



🤝 Hardy Group

This volunteer-led charity now supports more than 220 people affected by dementia.

Members heard how social activities, trips, entertainment and strong community connections help people stay active, reduce isolation and build lasting friendships.

Hardy Group

🎶 OPUS Music – Mind & Melody

A co-produced music programme in Bolsover has demonstrated how involving people with lived experience from the start can help create successful and well-attended activities.

Participants helped design the programme, choose its name and shape its future direction.

Home - OPUS Music CIC

🌱 The Connection Space CIC

The group learned about innovative work supporting people through creative activities, nature, volunteering opportunities and relationship-based approaches.

Particular interest was shown in plans to develop "Connection Boxes" to help families enjoy meaningful activities together at home.

Community | The Connection Space Community Interest Company

📢 Help Us Grow the Group

We are keen to expand the group to more people with lived experience of dementia, carers and family members. By sharing your experiences, you can help influence local priorities, improve services and make a real difference across Derbyshire and Derby.

To find out more or get involved, contact: 📧 derbyshire@alzheimers.org.uk